



APO NEWS

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APO e-outreach

“We do not commute but we communicate,” said APO resource speaker Pawan Kumar, Group Head, Energy Management, National Productivity Council, India, when describing the APO e-learning course on Energy Efficiency. His words reaffirm the transformative power of information technology (IT) as a method for exchanging information. The training course utilized the Global Distance Learning Network (GDLN), a videoconference-based network of the World Bank. The GDLN is one of two platforms used in APO e-learning courses, with the other being the e-Learning Portal, which provides Web-based distance-learning and self-learning opportunities.

Recognizing the potential of IT, the APO embarked on a series of e-learning projects in 2005. The e-initiative has flourished, providing the distinct advantage of reaching a large audience in a timely, cost-effective manner. The GDLN-based courses in particular have been enormously successful, attracting an ever-increasing number of participants since the first two in 2006 attended by around 300 participants. More recently, however, according to APO Secretariat Industry Department Program Officer K.D. Bhardwaj: “The total number of participants from three GDLN-based programs held in 2007 and 2008 was around 900 and 930, respectively. The number for 2008 will again increase up to 1,500 once two other ongoing courses are completed.”



Participants in the Philippines celebrating course completion

e-Learning courses also allow the APO to reach more private-sector participants. In 2007, close to 40% of those 900 participants were from the private sector. In the three courses completed so far in 2008, about 60% of those who attended represented the private sector. “Most APO courses focus on delivering practical knowledge and how to apply theory in the real working context of each participant. I believe that this is one of the key success factors of APO e-learning courses and why they appeal to many people, especially from the private sector,” said Program Coordinator Eiko Wataya, World Bank Tokyo Development Learning Center (TDLC). APO e-learning courses are conducted in collaboration with the TDLC, which provides videoconferencing facilities and technical support.

Contrary to the perception that e-learning courses are less popular primarily due to a lack of face-to-face contact with resource persons and others, nearly 90% of participants evaluated these courses as “more than expected” or “as expected.” This is attributed not only to the effectiveness of IT but also to the efforts devoted to making the courses relevant and interesting. “Local program components such as site visits and group tasks are included to promote participants’ involvement, interactions, and information sharing,” Bhardwaj noted, emphasizing the importance of two-way communication in training. He added that, “Various local activities and careful management for sharing and question-and-answer (Q&A) sessions prevent the courses from being one-way information delivery.” In his recent e-learning course on Energy Efficiency, 97% of participants rated the course as “more than expected” or “as expected.” Trainee Graduate Consultant Nilesh Roneel Kumar, Training and Productivity Authority of Fiji, a local coordinator, commented that, “The course covered the subject very effectively. The Q&A session, in particular, was well managed, enhancing participants’ understanding and knowledge of the topics presented by resource speakers.”

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Pakistan's journey to industrial competitiveness

Tariq Bajwa

Former Chief, National Productivity Organization

Competitiveness is the flip side of productivity; to be competitive on a sustainable basis it is essential to enhance productivity. While Pakistan as a nation is aware of the significance of productivity in the context of achieving higher economic growth, the potential for productivity improvement has not been fully tapped. One of the methods to do this is the introduction of a journey to competitiveness which will allow enterprises in Pakistan to meet global market and economic challenges.

In recent years, a number of international agencies has ranked the competitiveness of each country on the basis of various indicators, of which the Global Competitiveness Report of the World Economic Forum is the most important and most often quoted. For the past four years, the competitiveness ranking of Pakistan was below the median for most indicators. This tells us that Pakistan has a long way to go even to achieve average rankings in terms of competitiveness indicators. However, this journey has already started thanks to the launch of a long-term national productivity improvement plan. This plan, New Productivity Vision 2012, was initiated by the National Productivity Organization (NPO) of Pakistan in 2007 as part of the national strategy for competitiveness improvement.

“...in today's increasingly competitive environment, economic growth demands better, faster, cheaper, and more environmentally friendly products and services.”

Determinants and importance of industrial competitiveness

Pakistan ranked 91st among the 125 countries listed in the Global Competitive Index in 2006 and scored 3.7 on a scale from 1 for the poorest to 10 for the highest rank. Although it is encouraging to note that Pakistan's score improved from 3.5 to 3.7, moving the nation from 94th to 91st, it is still low. This low competitiveness is mainly due to the unskilled



labor force and outdated production technologies combined with poor working conditions. It is therefore essential to strategize and equip our industrial sector with the latest productivity and quality development tools and techniques. For the past 45 years, government policies have given importance to productivity and competitiveness and their impact on the national economy. However, in today's increasingly competitive environment, economic growth demands better, faster, cheaper, and more environmentally friendly products and services. All these factors have become the key to industrial survival and further development.

Pakistan today is a developing country with 160 million people and an average GDP per capita of US\$950. Although Pakistan has made strong economic progress in the past five years, it still has a long way to go. Like most other developing countries, Pakistan has also adopted an export-led growth model. However, despite our comparative advantage in many fields, we are facing an uphill task in efforts to expand our share of the international market. A growing gap in our trade balance has led to a burgeoning current account deficit. Pakistan has not been able to compete effectively with the large economies of PR China or India, both of which enjoy the benefits of economies of scale and are preferred destinations for foreign direct investment. One critical reason for Pakistan's inability to compete effectively is low productivity.

New Productivity Vision 2012 and its thrust areas
Realizing the importance of industrial competitiveness, the NPO of Pakistan launched its New

Productivity Vision 2012 last year with the mandate to foster a productivity-enabling environment. The new vision states that the NPO will “act as a catalyst to improve productivity to achieve global competitiveness.” This vision was developed in consultation with various stakeholders associated with the NPO. The top management of the NPO, its employees, and stakeholders are all committed to making this vision a reality. The vision focuses on the five thrust areas of training, benchmarking, energy efficiency, innovation and value, and Green Productivity. To accomplish the desired goals and objectives, six divisions have been established within the NPO: Training and Consulting, Benchmarking, Bureau of Energy Efficiency, Innovation and Quality, Research and Publication, and Information and Communication Technology.

“The essence of the competitiveness strategy is to encourage firms to improve information supply, enhance workforce skills, and upgrade technology and management processes.”

New Productivity Vision 2012 implementation strategy

To achieve global competitiveness, the NPO of Pakistan has adopted a three-stage strategy for New Productivity Vision 2012.

Awareness and consciousness stage

The objective of this stage is to create widespread awareness of the five thrust areas of New Productivity Vision 2012. The activities in the first stage will focus on building a positive attitude; developing teamwork dynamics and quality mindsets; introducing new productivity methodologies, tools, and techniques; building and strengthening strategic national and international linkages; and recognizing and appreciating companies and individuals who can be champions of productivity.

Action stage

The main objective of the second stage is to trans-

late “awareness” into specific programs that will improve productivity at the workplace and result in greater industrial competitiveness. The focus in this stage will be on upgrading managers’ and workers’ skills by applying productivity improvement methodologies, improving operational efficiency, enhancing energy efficiency, developing best practices, improving the environment, and encouraging innovation.

Sustaining stage

The third stage is to bring sustainability to the field of productivity, quality, and innovation by focusing on promoting a self-sustaining productivity movement through private-sector ownership, developing productivity champions within companies, imbuing quality consciousness, promoting industrial innovation and business excellence, and introducing emerging productivity and quality techniques.


Measures for improving industrial competitiveness

The essence of the competitiveness strategy is to encourage firms to improve information supply, enhance workforce skills, and upgrade technology and management processes. The government of Pakistan has mandated different organizations to work on specific aspects of productivity challenges. The contribution of the NPO of Pakistan will be primarily in the fields of training and skill

development, replication of international best practices through benchmarking, and cost reduction by practicing energy efficiency.

With regard to energy efficiency in industry, especially in the textile sector, the NPO of Pakistan has conducted various projects in collaboration with the APO. It has been estimated that energy costs account for around one-third of the total production cost in the textile industry, which represents Pakistan’s industrial backbone. Thanks to a demonstration project conducted by an APO-deputed expert, it was shown that 15–20% of total energy costs can be saved.

Conclusion

The NPO of Pakistan is poised to play a lead role in the nationwide drive for improved competitiveness/productivity. Its achievements in the past and the experience of a small but dedicated team allow me to assert with confidence that the NPO can play the role of a catalyst for the economy, especially in the industrial sector. The future strategic journey to competitiveness will definitely reengineer the services offered by the NPO. While it is true that today the NPO has the administrative as well as financial wherewithal to achieve New Productivity Vision 2012, it is also true that continuous technical support will be required from the APO and NPOs of other APO member countries. 



Comment board



Core Consultant Sixto A. Requena, PEMconsult, USA.

Resource speaker, seminar on Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) for Improving the Productivity of Irrigation Systems, 25–30 August, Sri Lanka.

“One of the seminar objectives was to enhance the participants’ understanding of the issues, challenges, and opportunities in PPPs for irrigation management. Therefore, at the seminar I

spoke about the options and challenges when using PPPs to improve irrigation system management (ISM) efficiency in Asia. I used a project cycle approach to explain the rationale of risk distribution between government and private partners in improving ISM by means of various optional PPP contracts. The seminar went well, and I was very impressed with the practical nature of the discussions, which focused on PPP options to improve ISM efficiency and irrigation service reliability. After four days of discussions including presentations of country cases, participants worked in groups to come up with action plans for their own countries. I think that the key achievement of the seminar was that it concluded with practical recommendations to prepare actions plans to use PPP contracts. The challenge is now how to prepare and undertake such action plans.”

Tourism Operational Officer II Ma. Elenita I. Pajarillo, Department of Tourism, Philippines.

Participant, seminar on Green and Productive Tourism with Special Focus on Green Certification, 4–8 August, Nepal.

“The seminar was greatly appreciated since it made me realize the importance of responding to calls for sustainable development. It is undeniable that the

tourism industry, especially hotels and restaurants, negatively impact the environment. It is therefore imperative for each country to promote green and productive tourism and come up with green certification schemes/programs. The course was very well timed and served as a venue for us to understand the importance of green and productive tourism and learn from Asian and European experiences in green certification. With the knowledge I gained from attending the seminar, I plan to coordinate with our Accreditation Division for the inclusion of additional environmental criteria in the present accreditation system for hotels and restaurants in collaboration with the private sector. I am very hopeful that in the next few years each participating country will be able to have its own green certification scheme.”

Energy Efficiency Expert Ramesh Prasad Nepal, Energy & Environment Committee, Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FNCCI).

Participant, regional workshop on Biomass Utilization for Industrial Boilers, 18–23 August, Pakistan.

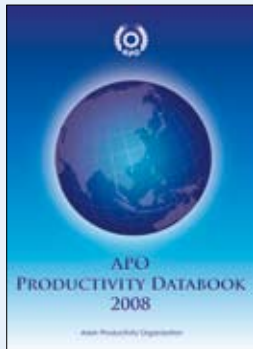
“Given that Nepal is an agricultural country, biomass utilization in industrial boilers is quite popular, since rice husk, straw, forest waste, jute straw, wood, etc. are common forms of fuel utilized in industrial boilers for increasing productivity in energy production and utilization. Since the majority of our industries are SMEs, the utilization of biomass in boilers for producing steam is necessary to reduce energy costs and so increase competitiveness. The objective of my participation in the workshop was to upgrade my knowledge and skills. This will allow me to increase the efficiency and energy conservation of industrial boilers by means of training and demonstration. Most of my needs were satisfactorily met by the course, since I am now planning to organize a local training program jointly with the National Productivity and Economic Development Center and FNCCI. I would suggest including more case studies in the program and utilizing the site visits for effective learning and discussion.”



Reading productivity and economic trends

Part 6: The evolving role of the service sector

Eunice Y.M. Lau, visiting research fellow at Keio Economic Observatory, Keio University, and Koji Nomura, Associate Professor at Keio Economic Observatory, Keio University



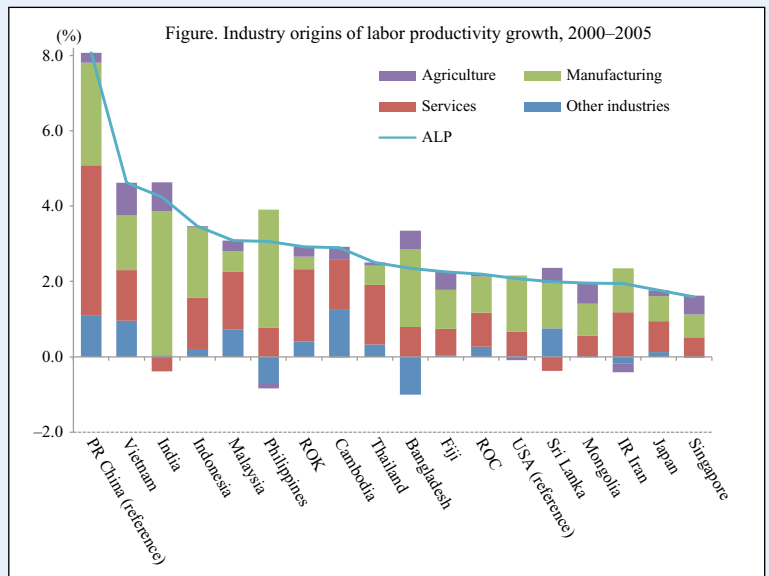
is doomed to decline.

Traditionally, technological advances tend to favor manufacturing more than services, resulting in the former sector being the engine of productivity growth in an economy. Services, in contrast, have been perceived as the technologically stagnant sector. If its relative claim on resources in the economy is rising, overall productivity growth will be dragged down to the rate prevailing in the stagnant sector. When this so-called Baumol's disease takes root, economic growth

In recent years, however, a cure for Baumol's disease has started surfacing in empirical evidence, which points to the emerging capability of some service industries to capitalize on information and communication technologies (ICT) and achieve productivity growth. J.E. Triplett and B.P. Bosworth (*FRBNY Economic Policy Review*, September 2003) declared that, "Baumol's disease has been cured." This assertion was based on their findings that in the USA, labor productivity growth in the service industry equaled the economywide average in the latter half of the 1990s, driven by an unprecedented surge in total factor productivity growth. In short, services are no longer the sick industries in terms of productivity growth.

The pervasive nature of ICT has meant that its impact is not reserved for manufacturing but also can transform service industries. ICT is also seen as a disruptive technology, productive assimilation of which often requires a major overhaul of business practices. The role of ICT in service industries is two-fold. First, it provides an enabling technological platform to create and launch new service products. As ICT fundamentally improves the efficiency of data and information processing, its effective exploitation not only leads to an expansion of product possibilities but also creates new business formats and new industries selling service functionality. Second, by providing a cost-effective, time-efficient, borderless medium to store, present, and transmit information, ICT networks together with digitalization have helped make information and knowledge more marketable and breach the physical barrier of national boundaries. If supported by trade liberalization efforts, the international market offers these IT-using service industries new business opportunities and scope to reap economies of scale, which are unavailable to traditional services.

The service sector accounts for the biggest share of total value added in Asian countries, independent of their stage of development (Table 8, *APO*



Productivity Databook 2008). The accompanying figure shows contributions of the service sector to labor productivity growth during 2000–2005, which were particularly prominent in India, accounting for just under 90%. At 5.8% on average per year, services were the sector with the highest labor productivity growth in India. This is consistent with the well-documented economic surge of India in the 1990s via its IT-based high-tech information services, which flourish on human rather than physical capital. By providing new ways to compete, modern ICT has allowed India to take an unusual path in economic development, bypassing a stage when manufacturing steers. Rather than being a laggard sector, service industries can be a leading sector driving productivity growth and development if ICT can be successfully assimilated and exploited. 🌀

Group	Agriculture (%)	Manufacturing (%)	Service (%)	Other (%)
1	1.1	24.0	68.9	6.1
2	7.3	30.9	47.9	13.9
3	14.3	21.1	50.6	14.1
4	28.0	15.5	42.9	13.6
USA	1.0	12.4	77.6	9.0

Group 1 (countries with >70% of per-capita PPP-GDP level relative to the USA): ROC, Singapore, Japan; group 2 (20%–70%): ROK, Thailand, Malaysia; group 3 (8%–20%): PR China, India, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Fiji, IR Iran, Philippines; group 4 (<8%): Cambodia, Vietnam, Lao PDR, Bangladesh, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan.

Common sense talk

“Traditions are the guideposts driven deep in our subconscious minds. The most powerful ones are those we can't even describe and aren't even aware of.”

Ellen Goodman

“Whenever man comes up with a better mousetrap, nature immediately comes up with a better mouse.”

James Carswell

“Asia will continue to have the largest number of people without basic or adequate access to water. Such water stress in the face of rising demand and poor water management will sharpen competition between urban and rural areas, between neighboring provinces, and between nations.”

Brahma Chellaney

The GDLN-based training course on Exporting Processed Agrifood Products in Major Global Markets was conducted in three phases for 17 countries, organized into groups by time zone. The course featured three resource speakers from important global agriproduct markets: Japan, the USA, and Europe. A Malaysian resource speaker outlined best practices. This course was experimental because resource speakers from nonmember countries such as the USA and Europe made presentations from their own countries. It was confirmed that it is feasible with good program scheduling and time management. US resource speaker David Lennarz, Vice President, Registrar Corp., a private agency assisting companies with FDA regulations and registration, commented that, "This time difference was difficult only in the second phase held in June. My session ended at around 02:00 and thus was rather tiring at the end. However, the other two sessions ended at 23:00 and 12:00, which was manageable."



The screen at the GDLN center in Thailand displaying all course venues simultaneously

The e-learning course on the Toyota Production System (TPS) has been conducted each year since GDLN-based courses started. The key objective is to accelerate understanding of the TPS, also known as lean manufacturing or lean production, and eventually develop local experts to establish and lead TPS communities of practice. Given the technical nature of the subject, the APO designated a national expert from each participating country to conduct an offline session on TPS methodologies. Overseas experts delivered presentations in videoconference sessions. Local coordinator-cum-expert Dr. P.H. Dissabandara, Director, Securities and Exchange Commission, Sri Lanka, shared the encouraging progress made in his country: "We now have a Sri Lankan TPS group. The group members have already visited two companies to observe TPS practices and exchanged learning experiences and views."

The first phases of two ongoing projects, SA8000: Social Accountability Management System and ISO22000:2005 Food Safety Management System, were completed in September. "Time constraints are a problem in Q&A sessions following experts' presentations due to the limited online time available for this purpose," explained Agriculture Department Program Officer Dr. Muhammad Saeed, who has conducted the ISO22000:2005 e-learning course for two consecutive years. "To alleviate this problem, a frequently asked question (FAQ) sheet was prepared based on the queries received last year. The FAQ sheet was provided to participants prior to the commencement of phase 1. It certainly worked well, allowing time for more in-depth online discussion."

In view of the successful experience last year with an e-learning course followed up with a face-to-face project, all e-learning courses this year will have this format, with high-performing e-participants selected for the traditional project follow-up. Bhardwaj, who organized a follow-up workshop on Green Productivity and Integrated Management Systems in January this year, commented that, "I think it is a very effective approach to make a linkage between e-learning and a face-to-face project." The workshop was attended by 23 professionals selected from among 350 e-learning participants from 15 member countries. The following three points were highlighted as success factors in the project: a special bond among participants and resource speaker established through the e-learning course; the high quality of participants who had previously undergone basic training on the topic via e-learning; and properly designed advanced training building on participants' acquired knowledge.

"I think that continuity is important in achieving consistent improvement for both trainers and trainees. The APO organizes projects on subjects in a consistent manner and at the same time explores new topics using the e-learning format. The resulting accumulated experience and skills are one of the key success factors of APO projects," commented TDLC Manager Ryu Fukui. The APO Secretariat formed an e-learning team to develop the most effective course models. These efforts to improve the e-learning courses will continue, with the introduction and adoption of new modalities for delivering the APO's services more effectively to member countries.

New officer at Secretariat

Yoshimi Sasaki started work at the APO Secretariat as an Administration and Finance Officer on October 15. After receiving a degree in International Politics, Economics, and Business, the native of Tokyo was employed by an international corporation with offices in 130 countries, where she gained experience in numerous areas including human resources management and recruitment, service delivery, and the promotion of e-commerce. She looks forward to "being more productive" in her new position with the APO. The bilingual Sasaki is married and when not hard at work, she enjoys playing with her dog in her free time.



Production innovation German style

In the rapidly changing global business environment, the need for manufacturing companies to develop more efficient manufacturing processes is acute. The goal of innovative production methods is to maximize the competitive edge from technology development, thus contributing to customer value and profitability. Germany is the world leader in production system innovation.

To provide member countries with an opportunity to investigate such systems in Germany, the APO organized a study mission on Production Innovation, 15–19 September, to Hannover. The five-day mission was comprised of nine visits to companies, business associations, and institutions where 10 participants representing the private sector, NPOs, and government examined innovative production concepts and their applicability in Asia. The guide was APO resource speaker Hisazumi Matsuzaki, a management consultant from ChuSanRen (Central Japan Industries Association).

The mission kicked off with a visit to Volkswagen headquarters in Wolfsburg. Volkswagen is the world's third-largest automobile manufacturer in terms of unit production. "We could observe almost every theory of mass production in practice: material flow, inventory control, automation, robots, etc. The plant was so huge that the plant tour route was more than 7 km. It was the biggest plant that I've visited," commented Assistant Manager Yoon Eng Tong, Nanyang Polytechnic, Singapore.

At the headquarters of Solvay Fluor, the world's leading supplier of fluorine compounds and fluorine chemicals, Innovation Manager Dr. Johannes Eicher defined innovation as "the process by which an enterprise converts the creativity of its employees and partners into added value, both faster and better than its competitors." Solvay Fluor's strategy for innovation is based on partnering with external organizations including customers, suppliers, universities, and start-ups under a scheme called InnoCentive, a concept combining innovation



Dr. Eicher introducing Solvay Fluor's innovation strategy

and incentive. It also operates an internal online suggestion scheme called Innoplace.

The visit to Hannover Fabrik (factories), an association of 18 companies, highlighted the importance of collaborative efforts in achieving innovation. PZH GmbH (Hannover Center for Production Technology), a Hannover Fabrik member, invited the mission to its offices and explained that it provides free laboratory and office space along with strategic coaching for universities and entrepreneurs in optical technologies, software for production technology, production development, and consulting and engineering for up to five years. The final destination was Fagus-Grecon Greten GmbH, a 98-year-old company that originally made wooden clogs but expanded into measuring systems for fire prevention and finger-jointed wooden parts. Fagus-Grecon Greten has three principles for maintaining its competitive edge: improvements in operations; continuous education; and idea management with zero faults.

The mission confirmed that while qualitative differences exist in productivity systems between Europe and Asia, improvements could be achieved by learning from each other. 🌀

Frontier technologies and impact on Asian economies

New technologies can impact society tremendously. The adoption and diffusion of a frontier technology can create entirely new industries. However, a frontier technology can also mean the end of enterprises employing obsolete technologies, thereby causing job losses. Thus frontier technologies can change daily life significantly, sometimes beyond recognition.

Recognizing the need to understand frontier technologies and their impact more fully, the APO organized a study meeting in Seoul, Republic of Korea, 9–12 September, as a platform where member countries could share experiences and learn from each other about the various approaches, strategies, and best practices in adopting frontier technologies for greater competitiveness. "There is no one common definition of frontier technologies that satisfies all APO nations," said APO Secretariat Research & Planning Department Senior Program Officer Lee Kia Yoke, who attributes the different perspectives to different economic development stages. "However, there was a reasonable understanding at this meeting that frontier technologies allude to technologies that are new and advanced relative to what is prevailing in one's current landscape," added Lee.

The APO invited four eminent experts from the Republic of China, Japan, Republic of Korea, and Singapore to introduce the current status and trends of frontier technologies in their countries. Local Chief Facilitator Dr. Key-Hyup Kim, Seoul National University, cited frontier technologies as new growth

engines for his country, and introduced R&D initiatives conducted by government research institutes (GRIs), universities, and the private sector. Dr. Kim stated that, "Korea's R&D efforts now focus on becoming an innovation leader rather than a fast follower, moving from 'catching-up with new products by copying' to 'creating front runners.'"

The other resource speakers and participants from the 10 countries presented actual examples of frontier technologies such as micro electromechanical systems, biotechnology applications, life science industries, etc., along with various R&D efforts for new technology development and industrial commercialization. Three sessions were allocated for group discussions that examined issues, strategies and processes, and key success factors in adopting frontier technologies. The discussions identified those key factors as consistent government policy, adequate human resources, the availability of science and technology organizations, R&D investment, and systems of national innovation, including culture. There were some differences between nations, depending on their prevailing level of technology. However, all agreed that more effective cooperation among APO members and fostering inter-GRI cooperation could represent the way forward. All the groups therefore recommended the APO's proactive involvement, particularly in spearheading member collaboration on common global issues such as energy and the environment to ensure future generations' survival on earth. 🌀

Program calendar

February

Japan

Multicountry observational study mission on Environment-friendly Farming Technologies, 2–7 February.

▶ Objective: To enhance participants' awareness of the impacts of farming on the environment and global warming and different approaches to mitigate these and formulate appropriate strategies for promoting environment-friendly farming technologies, creating new business opportunities, and managing the impact of agriculture on the environment.

▶ Participants: Officials of government agencies, nongovernmental organizations, industry associations, and academia involved in R&D, regulation, extension, and advocacy for environment-friendly farming technologies; or managers and marketing officers of agribusinesses.

Republic of Korea

Multicountry observational study mission on Advanced Technologies for Greenhouse Farming, 16–20 February.

▶ Objective: To study the institutional and policy arrangements for greenhouse farming; learn about modern technologies and approaches adopted by the host country for greenhouse farming; observe state-of-art technologies for greenhouse farming; and formulate action plans to utilize the advanced greenhouse farming technologies of participating countries.

▶ Participants: Mid- to top-level managers, officials, consultants, or representatives of farmers' associations and academia involved in the development/promotion of greenhouse farming.

Kindly contact your NPO for details of future activities, including eligibility for participation. The project details along with the address of your NPO are available from the APO Web site at www.apo-tokyo.org.

APO at the Global Festa Japan 2008



Visitors enjoying the map game at the APO booth

The APO participated in the annual Global Festa held in Tokyo's Hibiya Park to celebrate and publicize Japan's international cooperation efforts. Approximately 96,000 people from all walks of life visited this two-day event held on 4 and 5 October. The APO took a booth at this huge festival to showcase its services and to create awareness of its activities among the Japanese public, along with more than 200 other international, governmental, and nongovernmental organizations located in Japan.

The APO booth, decorated in productivity cartoons and newly designed productivity posters with a large P representing productivity, progress, and prosperity, featured balloons for children and displayed information on its activities. An upgraded map game invited visitors to identify the capital name and location of member countries using their national flags. The APO booth also gave away selected free publications.



A Hyper Cycle Systems manager explaining how to recycle home electric appliances Seminar on the 3Rs (Reduce, Reuse and Recycle), Japan, 6–10 October 2008.



Visiting Taoyuan Irrigation Association Study meeting on Monitoring and Management of Agricultural Water Quality for Green Food Production in the Asia-Pacific Region, Republic of China, 29 September–3 October 2008.

APO/NPO update

New e-mail address of NPO for Bangladesh

The e-mail address of the NPO for Bangladesh was changed to: dir.npo@btcl.net.bd.

The APO News is soliciting contributed articles on productivity endeavors, rewarding experiences during and after APO projects, and/or encouraging and inspiring examples of the productivity mindset



in action, which will provide new ideas and energy to the dissemination of the productivity movement in member countries. Those whose articles are accepted for publication will receive an APO T-shirt. If you would like to share your valuable experiences, please contact Information Officer Sunju Lee at the APO Secretariat (slee@apo-tokyo.org).

APO Photo Contest 2008 winners



Gold Prize: My friends
Subin Pumsom (Thailand)

The APO Photo Contest 2008 had the theme “Productivity: Tomorrow’s Hope.” The biennial contest, generously cosponsored by Fujifilm, was open to all nationals of APO member countries. More than 1,000 photos were received from 16 member countries. The 12 winners were decided by a panel of five judges on 25 September. The panel comprised two professional photographers, Shigeru Chatani and Sanae Numata; Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Malaysia to Japan H.E. Dato’ R.B. Radzi; Minister Counsellor D.M. Ratnayake, Embassy of Sri Lanka to Japan; and APO Secretary-General Shigeo Takenaka.

“I was once again very impressed with the variety of beautiful photos and enjoyed the process of selecting the winning ones,” said Chatani, who has led the judging panel since the contest started in 2001. “I could see improvements in the quality of photos, especially the careful consideration of the background and lighting of the main subjects.” He also advised future contest entrants to understand the purpose and theme of the contest and find a good subject to express their interpretation of the theme effectively.

The APO offers sincere congratulations to all the winners, who will receive their prizes soon. We also thank all who submitted entries for their enthusiastic participation. The next contest will be held in 2010, when we look forward once more to viewing the best efforts of the region’s many talented photographers.

The winning entries will be uploaded to the Photo Contest Gallery on the APO Web site after receiving transfer of copyright from the prizewinners. 



Silver Prize: Working for tomorrow
Tran Ngoc Tuan (Vietnam)



Silver Prize: Helping mother
Ta Quang Bao (Vietnam)



Bronze Prize: New green
Tran Vinh Nghia (Vietnam)



Bronze Prize: Autumn
Osamu Okada (Japan)



Bronze Prize: Happiness in the banana plantation
Preecha Charoenyossa (Thailand)



Photo Contest Judges (L-R) Chatani, Dato’ R.B. Radzi, Takenaka, Ratnayake, and Numata

Special Prize:

Collective effort, Indranil Sengupta (India)
We can do it together, Bong Chee We (Malaysia)
Flying dreams, Hoang Quoc Tuan (Vietnam)

Happy harvest, Nguyen Phi Hai (Vietnam)
My responsibilities, Huynh Thien Anh (Vietnam)
Using sunlight, Duong Ngoc Thu (Vietnam)